

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 21, 2002 LB 1309

don't know why we...why would we forget that...that fun that we had during that time? But we did cut \$171 million at that point. Now we're...now we're saying, okay, now let's just start all over again. We didn't really do that. We're just going to take it now and start over and say, well, now what are we going to do now? And I think you have to look at the cumulative effect, and you can see that after the Special Session, there was an 11.2 million dollar cut from...from the university, itself, and with the proposal by the Appropriations Committee, it will cut \$15.8 million from the university budget. And if we adopt Senator Redfield's proposal, that would make the effect a 20 million, a 20.1 million dollar cut to the university, a 4.5 percent. So I think we have to start looking at these figures and, once again, I draw your attention to the graph that I showed you yesterday, the colored graph, and you can see that, as Senator Coordsen said, in good times we kind of did a lot of wrong things, and I would agree with that. Several of the things that we did wrong was that we...I mean if you look at it from a dollar standpoint, one of them was to drop some income tax, another was to drop some sales tax. So we lowered, we intentionally lowered the revenue that the state was going to get, and then we thought we had so much money that we had to distribute it, so we gave \$30 million a year back to the taxpayers as a credit against the community college. And then, in addition to that, we jumped the amount that would go for state aid to education,...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: ...and state aid to the county governments. And you can see from that graph that that's the area where the increases have been taking place. And so I think that...that we're complicit in the idea of the position that we are in right now, but we are certainly not going to solve that budget problem that's been created by a 4...another 4 million dollar cut to the university, which, as Senator Wehrbein has said, is simply going to lower the quality of service, particularly to the rural areas. And those areas, I mentioned yesterday when we were talking about Senator Tyson's amendment, I mentioned that in North Platte at the...at what we call the Experimental Station, they had to drop the swine program. They